

Paxson's narrative does not account for Canning's so suddenly dropping his communications on South American matters with Rush, or for his final diplomatic advance to Polignac. Commerce or the pressure of merchants' petitions would have permitted recognition at any time after the entrance of the French armies into Spain. It was for another cause that Canning took the step that was to lead to recognition. Through Rush he had assured himself that the United States had no intention or interest in acquiring territory lately under the dominion of Spain. By Polignac he learned that France had no land-thirst to be assuaged in America. Having ascertained the position of the two powers most directly concerned, he could then prepare the instructions for his agents sent to South America, and deny that Great Britain had any idea of bringing any part of the late Spanish possessions under her dominion, or would tolerate their being brought under the dominion of any other power.

The proof-reading might have been better.

WORTHINGTON C. FORD.

*A Political History of Slavery.* Being an Account of the Slavery Controversy from the Earliest Agitations in the Eighteenth Century to the close of the Reconstruction Period. By WILLIAM HENRY SMITH, with an introduction by WHITELAW REID. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1903. Pp. xvi, 350; iv, 456.)

THE author of this work was one of the prominent editors and political leaders of Ohio during the period preceding and following our Civil War. He was an active party agent and a leader of party opinion in the course of the events which he narrates. A follower and youthful admirer of Clay and Corwin in Whig days, an ardent Republican and faithful follower and co-worker of Lincoln, Chase, Brough, Morton, and Sherman on the issues of slavery and Civil War, a constant editorial contributor to the party controversies of his day, himself heading his party ticket for the office of secretary of state in Ohio in 1864, Mr. Smith witnessed and helped to make a considerable part of the history of which he writes. His volumes reflect the issues and controversies, the men and measures, as they appeared to him in the midst of the struggle. It cannot be claimed, therefore, that he constructs his political history like an impartial and judicial historian. The party attitude is apparent. The author is fully convinced in his own mind, to begin with, that the cause of civilization and progress is with his side, and this leads him, naturally, to judgments and condemnations, to awarding praise and blame, to the language of censure and denunciation for the opponents of his cause. While the writer is large-minded and at times philosophical, the measure of argument for the other view, the reasons and circumstances influencing the adversary — such as may be necessary to the full presentation of the case in the court of history, are not fully meted out. The pleas of the contestants are not allowed as fully as should be to speak for themselves. But while this is true, as it is true of other con-

tributions to the history of this struggle by personal participants, the careful reader of Mr. Smith's volumes will be fully convinced that they are a valuable contribution to the literature of our political history.

The extent of his subject which the author's subtitle lays out for him would lead us to expect necessarily brief, if not inadequate, treatment of many topics. The fact is, very important aspects of his subject prior to the close of the Mexican War in 1848 are either omitted entirely or receive but scant attention. The status of slavery in the colonies, the causes and processes of emancipation in the northern states, the debates touching slave interests in the Federal Convention of 1787, the influence of the purchase of Louisiana, the causes for the subsidence of the abolition spirit of the period of the Revolution, the cotton-gin and the economic influences leading slavery to become entrenched in the south, the Southern defense and view of slavery — these topics, if mentioned at all, are but slightly and incidently touched upon. The Missouri struggle of 1820, one of the most important chapters in the slavery controversy, involving constitutional and political arguments of the first rank, is referred to in a few lines, and the compromise resulting from that exciting struggle is mentioned only in connection with and subsequent to its repeal in 1854. Less than three pages are devoted to the annexation of Texas. Lundy's work is but briefly recognized. Dr. Channing's essay on slavery in 1835 is regarded, perhaps quite properly, as the "most influential contribution to the discussion of the subject throughout the whole controversy." But Garrison and the Abolitionists, in whose cause Channing's pen was soon enlisted, are brought into view by our author chiefly for their condemnation. Their shortcomings and excesses; the violence of their language; the censure visited upon them by the moderate opinion of their time are recited: but their merits; their services to the cause of the slave at a time when theirs were the only voices raised in his behalf; the effects of their agitation on public opinion and parties north and south; their literature; the courage they manifested and the character and labors of the men and women promoting their cause; the humanitarian spirit and political theory underlying this cause; the great moral impulse given to the antislavery movement by Abolition agitators and organizers like May, Green, Jay, Phillips, the Tappans, Whittier, Lowell, and Emerson — most of whom are unmentioned; the political effect of their movement in promoting sectionalism and secession — these worthy subjects do not receive that share of attention and appreciation one has a right to expect in a history of American slavery. Theodore Parker, Henry Ward Beecher, and Harriet Beecher Stowe are not mentioned in the account of this struggle. Almost equal neglect is visited upon the Free-soilers and the political movement against slavery extension which they organized. Leaders like Birney, Hale, Andrew, Hoar, Sumner, Wilson, Julian, Palfrey, and Giddings are either left to one side or are but slightly noticed — Chase among all the pronounced antislavery men of his day being accorded suitable rank and influence. It is the safe Whig party-leaders — the politicians rather than the positive agitators and reformers — and the

Western men rather than the New Englanders — that receive our author's interest and attention.

Eighty pages of this work are given to the subject down to the presidential election of 1848. The omissions that we have cited on this period are, however, not without compensations. On the controversy touching the genesis of Abolitionism Mr. Smith goes back beyond Garrison or Lundy or Charles Osborne, and brings into view the work of John Woolman, a New Jersey Quaker who, it is stated (by an anachronistic misprint), was born in 1720 and who, "in 1732, at the age of twenty-six," published his essay on *Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes*. The cases involving the maritime law and national security for slavery on the seas; the influence of the Quaker migration from Virginia and the Carolinas to the Northwest, and its subsequent influence on the antislavery cause; the legal struggles for the slave, especially in Ohio; and valuable references to Ohio politics and leaders — the treatment of these topics gives decided value to this part of the work.

The more valuable parts of Mr. Smith's work begin with the discussions on the Wilmot Proviso (whose origin he attributes to Judge Jacob R. Brinkerhoff, of Ohio), the compromises of 1850, and the exciting political history which follows. These are events within his recollection and experience. He approves the Whig conservatism of Clay, Webster, and Corwin as necessary to the saving of the Union, and he claims that much was gained for freedom by the compromises of 1850. Corwin is given large prominence, and considerable attention is given to his speeches, especially the one against the Mexican War in 1847 and that on the political issues of 1859. Corwin's policy of committing the Whig party in 1847 to opposition to territorial acquisition as a means of avoiding the necessity of taking a party stand on the Wilmot Proviso is brought out in interesting correspondence. The antislavery men of Massachusetts, it is stated, "hoped to follow Corwin, but they wanted him to be as radical as themselves"; and Giddings is reproved for demands on Corwin that would lead to the organization of a new party, and for demanding of Winthrop "security for the future" before voting for him for speaker in 1849.

A full, complete, and satisfactory presentation of the large subjects coming up in the decade before the war is not attempted. But the principal topics are brought into review, and much valuable and important material is suggested, though but few phases of the struggle are fully considered. The volume is strong on the organization of the Republican party, in showing that it was by no means a party of abolition; that in its fundamental principles it was opposed both to the extension of slavery and to interference with that institution in the states; that resistance to slavery extension was the single paramount issue by which it was sought to unite under one banner Free Democrats, radical and conservative antislavery Whigs, German-Americans, and the antislavery Know-nothings. When Douglas interpreted the Republican issues in 1856, calling for "no evasion and no cheating, no skulking or lowering of colors" — instead of

“the rugged issues to which Douglas claimed the Republicans had committed themselves and which had been pressed to the front by the pronounced antislavery men” — “the more prudent counsel of Blair” was followed, who would call all to unite who objected to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and the extension of slavery. “This embraced thousands who were opposed to the repeal of the Fugitive Slave Law, to meddling with the interstate slave-trade or with slavery in the District of Columbia.” After a review of Buchanan’s administration from the standpoint of the opposition, and of the progress of the secession movement (which is attributed to conspiracy) and of the attempt at conciliation (in which the author approves the positive stand of Wade and Clark — that the provisions of the Constitution, if enforced, were sufficient to preserve the Union), the first volume closes with the opening of the war.

The second volume deals with the Civil War, Emancipation, and Reconstruction. The Peace Democrats and the Knights of the Golden Circle, especially the course of Vallandigham in Ohio, receive the attention of a chapter. The suspension of habeas corpus and the war powers of the President, national finances and the conduct of Congress, the politics of the war, especially the campaign of Governor Brough in Ohio, and the election of 1864, are set forth from the standpoint of loyalty to the administration. On Reconstruction and Impeachment the author is pronounced in opposition to President Johnson and in favor of the Congressional party. In these days when it is the custom of historical essayists to disparage the Congressional work of Reconstruction, it is well that we have an author restating as Mr. Smith does the causes leading to the drastic measures of Reconstruction, the arguments for manhood suffrage, the political theory underlying the War Amendments, and the faith in the equal rights of all men, white or black, that prompted the able and sincere Congressional leaders in Reconstruction times. For these and for many other aspects of these volumes the historical student, as well as the casual reader, will feel grateful to the author. Historical students are, also, pleased to learn that what may be considered a practical continuation of this work is being carried forward by the son-in-law of Mr. Smith, Mr. Charles R. Williams, editor of the *Indianapolis News*, in a *Life of Rutherford B. Hayes*. With President Hayes in politics and public life Mr. Smith was long and intimately associated. The original material which Mr. Smith has used and referred to, in the shape of correspondence, newspaper files, and pamphlets, and that which he transmits to his successor, will make these volumes of great value and interest to all readers and students of American political history.

The closing chapter of the work under review is contributed by Professor John J. Halsey, Professor of Political Science in Lake Forest University, under the caption, “The Failure of Reconstruction.” This brings into review, in a scholarly and judicial summary, the chief events and forces from 1869 to 1877 leading to the abandonment of the historical plan of Reconstruction by the withdrawal of the national military power from the south and the elimination of the negro from Southern

politics — “because,” as Professor Halsey says, “the best thought of the North at last realized that it is impossible to solve the social and moral problems of a people from without.” So far as the application of this vital principle in American government has wrought its logical and natural changes since Reconstruction times, the results and the failures of Reconstruction will be accepted without serious resistance. For there are few, if any, who now wish to quarrel with the old American idea that each state should solve its own social and political problems, subject only to the national law and interest, and with only such help as the state herself invites. But Professor Halsey’s brief view of Reconstruction, though it is the one now generally put forward by fashionable university scholarship, will certainly not pass among all thoughtful and candid men without exciting some antagonisms and a list of exceptions. The author of the work for which he writes would certainly not have written such a chapter. Passing by the quiet assumption that Reconstruction statesmanship produced no successes worth mentioning, we note a few implications that may well be brought to the light of further inspection.

Professor Halsey speaks of the negro’s “bidding a long farewell to the political arena,” implying that that condition is desirable and final. All carpet-baggers are made to look alike, — alike execrable and odious, and he recognizes no redeeming or ameliorating virtue in the carpet-bag régime. He speaks of the Fifteenth Amendment as giving the negro the ballot, “which has proved a curse rather than a blessing,” — which implies a condemnation of that amendment. Under the conditions then existing in the south it may readily be recognized as unwise to have required manhood suffrage through the Reconstruction state constitutions imposed by Congressional power. The erection of acceptable state governments, soon to be left to local control, with the power to regulate the suffrage by suitable and rational qualifications, would perhaps have been wiser statesmanship. But as the Fifteenth Amendment confers the suffrage on no one, nor assumes power in the national government to do so, it would seem to be better for teachers of political science, instead of inveighing against the amendment, clearly to recognize the soundness of its doctrine that limitations on suffrage and political rights should never be based on the accidents of race or color. The writing of that principle in the fundamental law of the land may still be reasonably claimed as a success that was well worth achieving. Professor Halsey will probably very readily agree that, while the principle of manhood equality before the law, regardless of race or color, may be temporarily violated, it is safe to say that it will not be surrendered nor permanently reversed, not even by the consent of the best thought of the South itself.

JAMES A. WOODBURN.